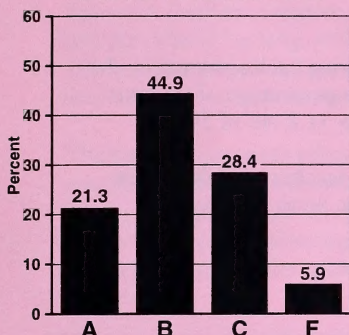


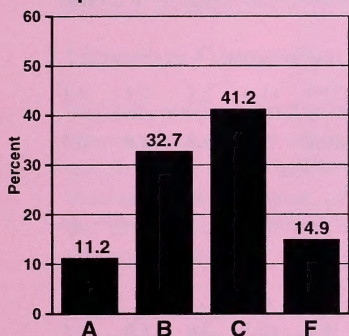
English 30

Diploma Examination Results Examiners' Report for January 1999

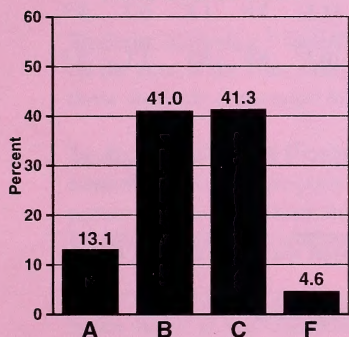
School-Awarded Mark



Diploma Examination Mark



Final Course Mark



The summary information in this report provides teachers, school administrators, and students with an overview of results from the January 1999 administration of the English 30 Diploma Examination. This information is most helpful when used in conjunction with the detailed school and jurisdiction reports that are provided electronically to schools and school jurisdiction offices. A provincial report containing a detailed analysis of the combined January, April, June, and August results is made available annually.

Description of the Examination

The English 30 Diploma Examination consists of two parts: a written-response section and a reading section. Each part is worth 50% of the total examination mark.

Achievement of Standards

The information reported is based on the final course marks achieved by 10 234 students who wrote the January 1999 examination and received a school-awarded mark.

- 95.4% of these students achieved the acceptable standard (a final course mark of 50% or higher).
- 13.1% of these students achieved the standard of excellence (a final course mark of 80% or higher).

Of the students who wrote the January 1999 examination, 57.2% were female and 42.3% were male.

- 96.5% of the female students and 93.9% of the male students achieved the acceptable standard.
- 15.1% of the female students and 10.5% of the male students achieved the standard of excellence.

Provincial Averages

- The average school-awarded mark was 68.6%.
- The average diploma examination mark was 62.9%.
- The average final course mark, representing an equal weighting of the school-awarded mark and the diploma examination mark, was 66.1%.

Part A: Written Response

Part A: Written Response is written at a different time from *Part B: Reading*. Students are required to complete two writing assignments related to the theme of a piece of literature. Both assignments assess a variety of reading, writing, and thinking skills.

Readers will find the results most meaningful in the context of the assignments and the scoring descriptors. The most useful starting place for reviewing these results is at the **3 Satisfactory** level. Such work exceeds the pass mark of 50%. The scoring guides that describe scoring criteria are in the 1998-99 *English 30 Information Bulletin*.

The table below outlines the requirements for each assignment, the categories for scoring each assignment, the amount each category contributes to the total mark (parts A and B combined), and the percentage of students achieving at the various levels. In January 1999, the average raw score for Part A was 31.8 out of 50.

By comparing school and jurisdiction results to the provincial results presented here, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students and, consequently, areas of potential strength and weakness in their programs.

Examination Blueprint and Percentage Distribution of Scores

Description of the Writing Assignment	Scoring Category	Proportion of Total Mark(%)	Percentage Distribution of Scores									
			Excellent		Proficient		Satisfactory		Limited		Poor	
			5	4.5	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	1	Ins*
Reader's Response to Literature Assignment												
The student is required to respond personally and thoughtfully to literature, and to communicate clearly and effectively in writing.	Thought and Detail	7.5	3.5	3.3	17.7	13.3	34.1	12.9	11.6	2.1	1.3	0.3
	Writing Skills	7.5	3.7	3.4	20.1	14.4	38.2	10.1	7.9	1.1	0.8	0.3
Literature Composition Assignment												
The major assignment maintains a thematic connection to the minor assignment. The student is required to demonstrate an appreciation of literary works studied in class by discussing theme and the literary techniques that the author uses to support that theme. The student is also required to synthesize thoughts clearly and correctly in writing.	Thought and Detail	12.5	4.6	3.4	16.4	12.0	28.7	14.9	15.5	2.6	1.6	0.3
	Organization	7.5	4.1	3.5	16.4	13.0	36.3	13.5	10.8	1.4	0.7	0.3
	Matters of Choice	7.5	5.1	3.4	18.5	12.4	39.4	11.3	7.8	1.1	0.7	0.3
	Matters of Correctness	7.5	6.0	4.4	19.8	14.1	33.5	10.3	8.9	1.5	1.1	0.3

***Ins** (Insufficient) is a special category that includes students who did not attempt the assignment, who wrote too little to evaluate, or who wrote answers that did not address the topic.

Note: The shaded portion represents the percentage of students who achieved or exceeded the *acceptable standard*.

Of this group, students with scores of 4, 4.5, and/or 5 have achieved the *standard of excellence*.

Reader's Response to Literature Assignment

The Reader's Response to Literature Assignment is intended to focus the student as a reader on his or her own response to a text and a theme that are provided. This assignment required students to respond to their reading of the poem "Arachne, Astonished" on the basis of what the poem conveyed to them about the significance of resourcefulness.

Students' responses indicated that it was a challenging task to grapple with the complexities of the poem and the relative novelty of the topic. They had to process the combined implications of the literary allusion, the commonplace details, and the complex concepts of gravity and weightlessness, and, out of this, articulate a response to the topic of resourcefulness.

The student responses often reflected a process of working things out as they wrote in the limited time available. Students who achieved **3 Satisfactory** frequently focused first on the literal aspects of the poem; that is, that spiders are resourceful in that they cleverly sustain themselves by creating and re-creating efficient means of gathering their food supplies. Many students went on to suggest that human endeavour was represented by the spider and its web. Many commented on the importance of our being able to "improvise."

Students who achieved scores of **4 Proficient** and **5 Excellent** presented thoughtful, perceptive responses as they explored the poem. Many recognized that truth and wisdom, as embodied by Arachne, are not absolute and that improvisation is constantly required.

Literature Composition Assignment

Students were required to develop and support a thesis based on appropriate literature regarding individual resourcefulness. For this assignment, students referred to a wide variety of literature including many of the novels newly on the approved list. Students discussed resourcefulness in terms of improvisation, innovation, self-reliance, perseverance, adaptability, any of which was a resourceful and acceptable thing to do. Students discussed either the nature of resourcefulness, the lack of resourcefulness, or the effect of resourcefulness.

The topic demanded careful consideration of the literature selected, the approach to the topic, and supporting detail. Students frequently focused on the development of an *idea* (which is what the assignment asks) without relying on the narrative structure of the literature. This was a challenging assignment and students rose to the challenge in a refreshing variety of ways.

Students achieving **3 Satisfactory** often regarded any successful outcome as evidence of "resourcefulness" on the part of the character. Unhappy outcomes were attributed to a lack of resourcefulness. Generally, these students contended that those with resourcefulness would endure and prevail.

Students achieving **4 Proficient** and **5 Excellent** often wrote perceptively about those factors that contributed to the presence or absence of resourcefulness. Writers at this standard often incorporated their personal reflection from the Reader's Response within their skillful discussions of the appropriately-chosen literature. For these students, "Arachne, Astonished" served as a helpful thematic "warm up."

Prior to the January marking session, the descriptors for *Organization* had been revised to accommodate a wider range of organizational choices. Markers commented that the changes are positive and do, indeed, reflect the tendency of many students to explore and discover as they write, presenting their theses at the end of their essays, rather than in their opening paragraph.

Question-by-Question Results

Part B: Reading

Question	Key	Difficulty*
1	B	53.1
2	C	85.2
3	A	60.4
4	D	66.9
5	C	58.8
6	B	63.2
7	C	86.0
8	D	67.7
9	A	59.4
10	D	64.2
11	A	29.0
12	D	48.8
13	C	67.3
14	A	58.1
15	A	50.1
16	D	39.4
17	C	53.0
18	A	62.6
19	C	69.7
20	C	41.7
21	B	60.7
22	C	61.9
23	C	46.1
24	A	73.4
25	C	58.4
26	B	70.2
27	A	65.2
28	D	69.8
29	B	50.4
30	A	61.6
31	C	44.4
32	A	77.5
33	D	82.4
34	B	66.1
35	B	71.8
36	B	78.3
37	A	59.0
38	D	71.0
39	A	67.3
40	A	72.8
41	D	56.4
42	C	75.2
43	B	79.3
44	D	75.4
45	B	53.2
46	A	67.9
47	C	50.7
48	B	59.8
49	D	86.1
50	A	48.3
51	A	70.3
52	C	68.4
53	B	54.6
54	D	68.7
55	C	69.7
56	D	68.3
57	C	42.2
58	D	54.7
59	D	45.1
60	B	51.3
61	A	53.1
62	C	52.7
63	B	62.1
64	C	71.1
65	D	58.7
66	A	52.7
67	B	55.9
68	D	71.3
69	--	--
70	B	66.6

*Difficulty—percentage of students answering the question correctly

The table at the left shows question-by-question results and the keyed answers. Parallel tables in the school and jurisdiction reports show the percentage of students who selected each alternative. By comparing school and jurisdiction results to provincial results presented here, teachers can determine areas of strength and weakness in the achievement of their students and, consequently, areas of potential strength and weakness in their programs.

Examination Blueprint

Part B: Reading has a value of 70 marks, however, one question was deleted leaving the value at 69. Each question is classified in two ways: by the curricular content area being tested and by the thinking (process) skill required to answer the question. The examination blueprint illustrates the distribution of questions in January 1999 according to these classifications.

Classification by Course Content	Classification by Thinking Skills			Total
	Literal Understanding	Inference and Application	Evaluation	
Meanings	31, 35, 48	3, 4, 7, 8, 13, 32, 33, 36, 37, 38, 43, 53, 55, 56, 59, 60, 66	2, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 19, 26, 28, 40, 45	31 Items (22%)
Critical Response	1	5, 6, 9, 15, 17, 20, 27, 34, 42, 52, 54, 57, 58, 61, 64, 67, 69*	18, 41, 47, 51, 62, 68	24 Items (17%)
Human Experience and Values		22, 23, 24, 25, 46, 49, 50, 63, 65, 70	21, 29, 30, 39, 44	15 Items (11%)
Total	4 Items (3%)	44 Items (31%)	22 Items (16%)	70 Items (50%)

*Question 69 was dropped from the examination before mark calculations were made. Therefore, a total of 69 marks was available.

Subtest Results**

Results are reported in average raw scores.

Total Part B: 44.6 out of 69

Course Content

- Meanings: 19.8 out of 33
- Critical Response: 13.6 out of 21
- Human Experience and Values: 9.5 out of 15

** Readers are cautioned **not** to compare subtest results because the subtests are not of equal difficulty. Instead, readers should compare these provincial subtest results with their own school subtest results.

Examiners' Comments

The following table gives results for 10 multiple-choice questions selected from the examination. These ten questions are based on an excerpt from the novel *The Birds on the Trees*. The reading is complex in that the limited omniscient narration indicates an internal conflict that the character, for various reasons, does not wish to reveal. In order to protect herself, she disguises her true feelings by responding to others in ways that are harsh and unsympathetic. The questions in this set were intended to discriminate between those students who recognized the character's true motivation and those who did not.

The table shows the percentage of students, in five groups, that answered each question correctly.

Percentage of Students Correctly Answering Selected Multiple-Choice Questions

Student Group	Question Number									
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
All Students	60.7	61.9	46.1	73.4	58.4	70.2	65.2	69.8	50.4	61.6
Students achieving the <i>standard of excellence</i> (80% or higher, or A) on the whole examination	80.2	83.5	72.4	94.0	87.3	84.0	87.6	89.9	78.7	80.4
Students achieving the <i>acceptable standard</i> who received between 65% and 79%, or B, on the whole examination	69.4	73.2	55.5	84.5	70.9	77.8	74.9	82.1	61.6	70.9
Students achieving the <i>acceptable standard</i> who received between 50% and 64%, or C, on the whole examination	56.2	56.6	38.2	67.8	50.3	67.6	60.1	64.9	42.3	57.2
Students who <i>have not</i> achieved the <i>acceptable standard</i> (49% or less) on the whole examination	39.6	35.8	27.8	48.9	31.9	50.6	41.2	41.5	26.7	39.0

21. The opening 14 lines of this excerpt introduce Sara's characteristic reluctance to betray her

- A. anxiety
- *B. empathy
- C. cheerfulness
- D. disappointment

Question 21: For the opening question of this set, students had to recognize the difference between Sara's true feelings and motivation, and the outward manner in which she relates to those she loves, namely Toby and his mother. Those students who did not achieve the acceptable standard more frequently chose anxiety over empathy (the latter being made apparent by Sara's inner thoughts) which may indicate that these students focused on the anxiety and disappointment that Sara does not conceal from Toby. Students selecting from the incorrect alternatives failed to recognize that Sara's disguise is worn to hide her true empathy. In order to avoid becoming drawn into the lives of her grandson and daughter, she is sharp, indignant and indifferent. Showing her true emotions, she feels, makes her vulnerable.

22. In line 19, “some rare, delicate creature they were privileged to look after” serves to suggest Toby’s parents’

- A. satisfaction
- B. desire to control
- *C. overzealousness
- D. dedicated understanding

23. Sara mentions Toby’s grandfather in line 24 in order to

- A. characterize her husband
- B. gain Toby’s sympathy
- *C. shift responsibility
- D. intimidate Toby

24. Sara’s unspoken attitude toward Toby’s intention to become a “jobbing labourer” (lines 53 to 62) is one of

- *A. respect
- B. resignation
- C. indignation
- D. indifference

25. Sara’s uneasiness in line 67 is **most likely** based on the fact that she

- A. realizes that Toby is wasting her time
- B. doubts the integrity of Toby’s motivations
- *C. senses that she is not going to escape responding to Toby’s need
- D. realizes that Toby’s parents understand him better than she does

Question 22: This question required students to consider the view of Toby’s parents that Sara presents through such loaded word choice as “delicate creature” and “privileged.” Those students who answered successfully recognized how the word overzealousness could be a description of a parenting style that Sara disapproved of and envied.

Question 23: As the most difficult question on this selection, this question illustrates how students answering correctly could infer from context, Sara’s motivation for mentioning Toby’s grandfather. By virtue of his age and position in the family, the grandfather must be considered in any decision affecting the household. But Sara “[thinks] of her husband gratefully; a shield, a wall, something to hide behind.” Only 46% of all students answered correctly; however, of the students who achieved the standard of excellence, 72.4% recognized that Sara defers to the grandfather in an attempt to avoid taking sides or being drawn into the lives of others. If this deference intimidates Toby, (alternative D) a reason many students who did not achieve the acceptable standard selected, it was not her intention.

Question 24: Students who achieved the acceptable standard were successful in recognizing Sara’s attitude. Sara sees Toby’s decisiveness as a strong expression of the qualities a young man should have. Sara had feared that his indulgent parents might have undermined Toby’s sense of responsibility.

Question 25: Students who answered this question correctly would have recognized that as Sara comes to admit to herself a respect for Toby, she has let down her defences and is uncomfortable doing so. The turning point has passed and Sara has a glimpse of what Toby is really going through. She cannot deny feeling just as he does about life, and she is exhausted by regret. Sara realizes she must face her responsibility.

Alternative B attracted many students (34%). They may have confused Sara’s uneasiness with doubt. It could be that Sara’s own doubt drew them to this answer but evidence clearly suggests that Toby has risen in Sara’s estimation at this point in their exchange. She no longer doubts Toby’s motivation although she may have doubted him initially.

26. Toby's emotional vulnerability is **most effectively** conveyed by
- A. "I'm not staying, Gran'" (line 32)
 - *B. "He smiled at her, but something had gone from his eyes. Some light" (line 42)
 - C. "I can't go home'" (line 44)
 - D. "By the time you get to know anything important, you're old'" (line 68)

27. In line 73, "restful illness" and "chimney corner" serve as
- *A. metaphors reinforcing Sara's desire to retire from family demands
 - B. oxymorons suggesting Sara's life of victory over family hardship
 - C. details that heighten the impression of family turmoil
 - D. details foreshadowing the family's dissolution

28. Sara's sense of inadequacy is **most effectively** conveyed in
- A. "she saw herself as a ship leaving shore, casting-off lines and sailing for deep, quiet waters" (lines 36–37)
 - B. "She felt, suddenly, both impatient and tired" (line 69)
 - C. "a big woman with plump, fiery cheeks, energetic and powerful" (lines 76–77)
 - *D. "a ruined fortress, only the strong walls standing" (lines 77–78)

29. In this excerpt, Sara is **most consistently** characterized as
- A. seeking to be a pillar of strength
 - *B. adopting a self-protective disguise
 - C. despairing of her failure as a mother
 - D. showing impatience with the needs of others

Question 26: This question proved to be the least challenging in the set, with 70.2% of all students answering it correctly. Students could likely identify more readily with Toby than Sara; therefore, they recognize the loss described in the correct alternative, B, as demonstrating vulnerability.

Question 27: Students who did not respond correctly to question 27 found B the most attractive alternative. This response indicates that these students were not able to differentiate between a metaphor and an oxymoron. Nor did they make the connection between Sara's wish for a "restful illness" as a way of escaping from the needs of her family.

Question 28: The 14.1% of students who selected alternative A failed to notice that the imagery in "sailing for deep, quiet waters" evokes a pleasurable peace, not inadequacy.

Alternative B distracted a small percentage of students because students saw a possible relationship between inadequacy and impatience and being tired. However, this connection is out of context, whereas the metaphor of a ruined fortress which is inadequate in times of battle is easily seen in Sara's own description of herself as unequal to the demands made by those who see only her outer façade.

Question 29: Even those students who achieved the standard of excellence had difficulty discerning the difference between alternative B and alternative A, the next most frequently chosen response.

Although others consider Sara a pillar of strength, and Toby seeks advice and sanctuary from her, she is characterized through the limited omniscient narration as being self-serving, having adopted a self-protective disguise. There is a constant contrast between what she thinks and what she says as she attempts to avoid responding to Toby. Her physical strength is what Toby sees but if she were seeking to be a pillar of strength for Toby she would have had to provide comfort as well as answer his troubled questions.

30. The **strongest** tension in this excerpt derives from
- *A. inner conflict
 - B. social conflict
 - C. moral discrepancies
 - D. generational struggles

Question 30: Alternative D attracted 22.5% of all students including 15.6% of those students achieving the standard of excellence. There are three generations in the excerpt and they are conflicted, but not with each other generally. Both Sara and Toby express inner conflict and we can conclude that Toby is really as much in conflict with himself as he is with his parents.

Comparison of Students' Results on Parts A and B

While it is not intended that Parts A and B of the English 30 Diploma Examination be considered as separate examinations, it is interesting to compare the distribution of scores on the two parts of the examination.

	Part A	Part B
A	15.0	11.8
B	26.7	29.9
C	45.0	36.1
F	13.3	22.2

As the discussions on pages 5 to 8 of this report have noted, student success on Part B: Readings is directly related to success on the examination as a whole (Parts A and B.)

As the table at the side shows, this close relationship is dramatically apparent at the standard of excellence. It is also apparent in the groups that failed Parts A and B.

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